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THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 26, 1855.

TO OUR READERS.—We believe that the successful conduct of an æsthetic journal in America has been sufficiently demonstrated by THE CRAYON. The voice of the public, so far as we have heard, has awarded it the credit of filling the position which its Editors proposed to it. That it is interesting and instructive, earnest and high toned, artists, amateurs and the unlearned public, alike agree. Thus far we have done all which could be demanded of us, though not all we hope to do should THE CRAYON be continued in existence. Yet the pecuniary success of our journal is far from decided. We believe it to be ultimately sure with perseverance; but, while we wait and the public lingers, our limit of capacity may be reached, and THE CRAYON fall on the threshold of triumph, simply because our capital is limited, and we are determined to incur no liabilities beyond our certain means. No unpaid printer's bills shall haunt the memory of THE CRAYON.

Premising so much, we have only to assure those who read the paper and desire its continuance, that some effort beyond our own is necessary to that object. If it had been merely a speculation on our part, we should not have believed in our right to ask any assistance unpaid for—but we have acted from a love for Art and a desire for its advancement, willing to make all possible pecuniary or other sacrifice, and only ask a just consideration when we request the co-labor of all whose intellectual or other interests are in any way concerned with THE CRAYON, —and, though we are in times of false pretences, we believe we have labored to poor advantage, if we have not convinced the public that we are at least honest in our professions of devotion to Art.

We believe that we have reached the large majority of those who are greatly interested in our speciality, or who have any real knowledge of it; but there are thousands who need the instructions of an Art journal more than these; those who are not yet interested, but have the capacity to become so, whose perceptions only need training to become sources of the keenest, most elevating enjoyment. To these, we believe, our paper could be made a means of essential moral good.

We were perfectly aware that heavy sacrifices were unavoidable in a new publication, and are prepared to meet very considerable ones; but this thing is certain, that if the class for whom we labor is not large enough to make our work feasible, it is not worth our devotion of time or money, and we shall go back to that practice of Art which is at once more pleasant and profitable than theorizing on it. We are willing to lose in the undertaking, but, when the limit is reached, we must stop. IN THE PURELY PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW, WE ARE PERFECTLY INDIFFERENT AS TO THE RESULT. Having been urged by the assurances and desires of friends of Art, and emboldened by many proffers of aid—proffers in a few cases only continued when needed—we shall withdraw if we find our position a false one in any regard.

If our readers are satisfied, then, that THE CRAYON is of real use, let them, as a matter of justice, make some vigorous exertion to establish it on a firmer basis than it at present stands on. We must have more subscribers, or we shall close with the present year.

Sketchings.

RACHEL AS HERMIONE.

THE restoration of Greek Drama must for ever remain a question in which the scholastic reverence of the antique opposes itself to the common instincts of the race. And yet the question is simple—the Greek loved Art as much in his sculpture as in his drama, and cared nothing for the vraisemblance which in-

terests moderns. He made no attempt to represent Nature—beauty, harmony, the ideal enlisted every energy. His drama was not spoken but chanted, with musical accompaniments, because it was more beautiful and elevating than the prosaic every-day talk of the beings around him, and which he liked too little to reproduce it either in poem or drama. His heroes and demi-gods spoke in measured dignity, as if their common life was poetry. He revered the gods and his ancestors whom the apotheosis had fallen on, and he made no efforts to conform his representations of their life to that which he lived.

To be natural, therefore, as we recognize the term, was no part of his dramatic study, but rather to be grand, majestic, heroic, to represent not the passions of men, but those of gods. The foolish maxim, that "the end of Art is to conceal Art," was not known to him, because he saw too deeply to confuse the terms Art and artifice, to which latter only does the maxim apply. Deception was no part of the plan. He cared nothing for scenery or stage illusions, and to him the truest poet was the finest dramatist.

To attempt, therefore, to reproduce the Greek drama, can result only in a compromise. Our masses cannot appreciate Art, but demand Nature, which they can to a certain extent comprehend. The scholastic dramatist concedes something to the public feeling, and the public, in deference to what it supposes to be his better judgment, makes a concession to the laws of Art, and with the result neither are satisfied. The actors, in their turn, take the majestic speech of measure and rhyme, but, instead of the Greek chant and pipes keeping time and majesty of port, they use the words of the gods with the voices of men, and comport themselves with all the violence and extravagance of common life. How Euripides would be horrified with this violation of the grandest unity of Art, that one grander than the great ones which he insisted on; how he would have abjured this hybrid dramatist Racine! To be neither artistic or natural! Ah, what a fate for genius.

Yet, as the actor can only follow his text, so Rachel always suffers with Racine; and her partial, yet satisfactory, because unhelped for, success in the artificiality of antique drama, at once proves her a great intellectual artist, rather than one of intense feeling; and the utter impossibility of the reproduction of Greek drama, so that it shall become popular. An artist whose expression depended on her being able to enter into the feeling of her character, would certainly fail in any of Racine's Greek plays, because the constraint and formality necessary are the death of genuine enthusiasm. Rachel measures the ground, determines how far she shall be passionate and natural, and how far artistic—she appreciates and embraces every point where the former is possible, and where the latter would give dignity, and the combination puzzles, pleases, and finally we are overpowered by weight of intellect without

being any more satisfied. She is dignified as an ancient, passionate as a modern.

The drama of Andromaque is a singular combination of villainy and rascality. Orestes treacherously murders a king at the altar to attain the object of his passion. Pyrrhus betrays his country and his honor, and still worse, uses the power fortune had given him to obtain an unwilling bride. Hermione sacrifices her love, her honor—all, to her revenge. Andromaque alone is consistent and unselfish, her conduct is the only bright trait in the drama. In the part of Hermione, Rachel is able to appear to advantage, as *playing* a part, a part too horrible not to be repulsive, if we should feel that the actress entered fully into it; and so we are better satisfied with the cold intellectual appreciation of it than we should be with the entire realization of it—we are content with it as we should be with murder on the stage.

Not to analyze the whole of her playing in this part (which it seemed to us was weak in the most passionate scenes, because it lacked the physical power which accompanies genuine rage, and Rachel tottered and trembled in the height of her fury, as no infuriated woman could, though dying), we felt as most just and satisfactory the coquetry with Orestes, and, above all, the triumph and delirious joy, when her rival comes to her feet to beg the life of her son; and the false Hermione, lost to all human pity, coldly refers to her duty.

"Vos yeux assez longtemps ont régné sur son âme
Faites-le prononcer, j'y souscrirai, madame."

Her tone, her air, are superb; she rises higher, and sweeps away with a wave of the hand, which tells more of womanly triumph and attained ambition than any words would. Her face is lit with a joy which almost rises over her revenge. She is content. The motion of that flexible hand, as it gives the seal at once to her rival's degradation and her own glory, haunts us more than all her words, or even than that rich, subdued voice in which exultation speaks low, lest it should betray itself into frenzy. That single scene was marvellous—it lacked nothing.

Is there no admirer of Rachel's genius who can give her a French version of Macbeth? As Lady Macbeth, it seems to us she must be mighty. But in Greek tragedy, there must ever be something lacking to the full measure of her success, and we do not know of any modern French tragedy which gives her full room for her powers, in respect of expression of dignity or majesty.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—I can scarcely express the heartfelt disappointment that your rather impatient review of "Art Hints" has brought to me. I had half read the book with great interest, though with some dissatisfaction from its obvious want of method and clearness, and, as it seemed to me, occasional contradiction, when your CRAYON came to hand; and now it wou seem that my mind has been laboring with absurdities, and imbibing falsehoods. Can there be, think you, a greater disappointment to an earnest searcher after truth? On which side is it to be found? Who is authority in this matter?

The avowed object of the book certainly meets

the wants of the age, in this country at least. If wisely carried out, it would give us at once, and in a condensed form, an important part of what we look for in the CRAYON, but which must there necessarily come in fragments, and at long intervals. If, then, you so ruthlessly destroy our hope in "Art Hints," in justice and kindness help us to authority that is authority. "Ruskin," you will doubtless answer. Well, Ruskin we will read; but he, I imagine, gives us his great world-picture, with all its minutest finish. Would some one give us the *outline*, do for us what Jarves proposes to do, we should then, I think, to better advantage, and with greater joy, study Ruskin. C.

Aug. 15th, 1855.

REPLY.

There are two things which ought always to excite impatience in the mind of a person who is really desirous of progress in Art—a Critic without knowledge, and an Artist without sincerity. We were decidedly impatient with "Art Hints," because it seemed to be an attempt at criticism on insufficient feeling or talent. If our correspondent has read the book with interest and profit, we are glad, and hope others may—we say of it, not that there is no good in it, but that there is so much that is incorrect and pernicious in it that it can in no wise take the place it aspires to.

There is, and can be no "authority" in Art, which shall justify the deference of one's own judgment. If "Art Hints" can point out to you a truth in Art, so that you can thenceforward see it for yourself, well and good, Ruskin can do no more, and until you so appreciate him, he is of no use to you. It is not what you receive, but what you learn, that hastens your Art education. You may accept and admit to your grey hairs, and your mere acceptance or admission goes for nothing. You must be your own authority, examining all things, and laying hold of all which you find good. You will pick up straws, perhaps, but you will gradually get rid of them, and find what you have to be substantial, valuable truth. But this sifting and bolting process no human mind can perform for you.

There can be no such outline of Art. We have too many compendiums already, by which men skim the surface of the departments they wish to study, and make of themselves that most worthless of all students, who know many things slightly, and nothing well. A knowledge of Art to be worth anything, must be more comprehensive even than the works of John Ruskin, and occupy more time than one would employ in reading one of Walter Scott's novels. We can give you no authority—no condensation—you must carry your studies through your life, and then not expect to grasp the whole system of Art-wisdom; and if, then, you have not given ten days to the study of nature, where you have given one to that of books, it is all ineffectual in leading you into the mystery and beauty of the principles of Art. Ruskin's "Stones of Venice" contains more valuable thought on Art, in its broadest acceptation, than all the other books in the world, but as the latter volumes have not been repub-

lished here, we cannot hope that they should be widely circulated; but to any one who really loves the study of Art, we can only say that there is no investment of the money so good as the cost of the English edition, in default of a cheaper American one.

The undersigned "trio" of Artists, at present domiciled in this village, for the purpose of outdoor study, are in dispute as to the truth of a certain statement, respecting "Turner," viz., that in painting, he made "his shadows warm and his lights cool," whereas the contrary seems to us to be nature's method. We appeal to you as persons conversant with the works of "the great painter," for enlightenment in this regard, through the columns of the CRAYON, or otherwise, as may be most convenient for you.

Lancaster, O.

REPLY.

We have no recollection of any picture of Turner's, in which the shadows are warm as compared with the lights, though it is possible that amongst his vagaries there may have been some. The law of nature is *unexceptionable*, that the shadows of *sunlight* are cool, compared with the lights. There is a seeming exception, where a direct cold sunlight is opposed by shadows illuminated by reflections from a warmly colored object; but this is no infraction of the law, since in this case it becomes a question of two lights differing in strength and warmth. Turner was a painter of Nature in the broadest relations, and not likely to lose sight of a trait so characteristic as this. Ruskin speaks of a picture which we have never seen, in which a shadow was painted with pure blue, but in all the pictures which we can recall, the truth of nature in this respect is adhered to.

A VISIT TO THE RELICS OF RAPHAEL.

The "lovers of Art and of Raphael" will read with interest the following description of the cast, made from the skull of Raphael, to which Crawford alluded in a letter lately published in THE CRAYON:—

"ROME, August, 1855.

"At the dinner given to the good old King Ludwig, at the Villa Albani, it was arranged that we should visit Signor Fabrii, and see the artistic treasures temporarily in his possession; so one bright afternoon we took our way down the Quatro Fontani to the Via Felice, where Signor F. has his studio. We were most cordially received by the old Venetian sculptor, who at once opened to us the sanctum wherein the precious relics were kept. I took in my hands the cast of the skull, and wondrously strange did it seem to hold thus the *fac-simile* of that which had once been the living temple of all that is most beautiful in the ideal world—the empty shell, as it were, of what had once been full of form and color, of poesy and sentiment; and very light was the head which, more than three centuries ago, was so often weary and heavy with the weight of thought and of glorious imaginings. But, it is not of my dreamings as I looked on it that you care to hear, but of how it was in itself. The head is

small, delicate, and full; and each organ is developed in the most beautiful proportion one to the other. Form, color, ideality, and amateness, are equally balanced. The sockets of the eyes are very large and round, fully verifying those soft, large, lustrous eyes, which look out so lovingly, so sadly, from Raphael's portrait of himself in the Florence gallery. The nose must have been unusually long, and, in shape, something between a Roman and a Grecian. The teeth are perfect in form, regular, and without spot, and, strange to tell, although he died at the age of thirty-seven, the wisdom teeth were just growing; two appeared to have only come half through, and two were scarcely discernible. The back part of the skull, that part which must have come in immediate contact with the coffin, was quite wanting; but the Tiber, which yearly overflows the Pantheon, and which thus for centuries penetrated through the stone and seal of that tomb, left behind a deposit of its earthy properties, which in destroying part of the bone, took the precise mould of that portion which it corroded.

"Most interesting was it to look on the cast of the skeleton right hand—there were the bones, small and great, of each long taper finger, and we could not but kiss with real devotion the form of that hand which had traced such mighty, such glorious works, and which had been so faithful a *hand-maiden* to the fertile brain.

"Interesting, too, were the fragments of buckles, the scraps of garments, and the splinters of the coffin, all of which had been religiously gathered up at the opening of the tomb, that none might be lost.

"You remember that Raphael died on Good Friday, so the burial took place on Saturday. The following Sunday being Easter, on which then, as now, all must be joy and gladness, and so the coffin was hastily made, and hastily laid in its resting-place. His friends and scholars followed him to his grave, and standing there, threw in little mementoes of their affection for him, rings, &c.; and there for three hundred long years was the seal set, and no outward inscription engraved thereon to tell the world of the treasure that lay buried beneath.

It was Signor Fabrii, in whose possession the cast was when we saw it, who interested himself in searching for traces of the hallowed spot, and who, finally, had the great good fortune to ascertain its exact locality. After being exhumed, the original skeleton was re-interred in its appointed place, and the cast of the skull and hand, together with the other relics, which were taken for a time into the safe keeping of the successful discoverer, are now to be placed under a glass case on a red velvet cushion, and deposited in the library of the Pantheon. All casts in Signor Fabrii's possession (he has three) are to be destroyed, and this single one preserved for the lovers of Art and of Raphael to look upon. I will send you a lithograph of the tomb as it appeared when first opened, and a description of the ceremonies of the second funeral. Few men attain to the honor of a second interment of this kind. There

come to my memory the names of but two who have thus been twice mourned—Raphael and Napoleon.

FOREIGN ART GOSSIP.

WAR has tended in curious ways to promote some of the arts. In the trenches before Sebastopol, as we have lately seen, the histrionic art is cultivated by the Zouaves, and a new theatre has been built on the site of the ancient Heracleus. Letters from St. Petersburg speak of the rage which at present possesses that capital for *tableaux vivans*,—which are got up on a costly scale, and with due attention to archaeology and decoration. According to the *Times* correspondence, these entertainments have been suggested by the highest personages in the realm. "The Emperor," says the correspondence in question, "having one day said, in the presence of his courtiers, that the nobles ought to invent some plan for preventing the commerce of the capital from feeling too severely the present state of things, and particularly the blockade of the Baltic, they forthwith set about organizing a series of *tableaux vivans*, the performers in which are persons of the highest class of society. As these *tableaux* represent the different episodes of Russian history at all epochs, the actors and actresses in them are obliged to make purchases of the richest stuffs for suitable costume. *Tableaux vivans* for the relief of the suffering tradesmen are at this moment the fashion on the banks of the Neva, and each noble feels obliged to give at least one of these patriotic pantomimes to avoid incurring the anger of his master, when no more generous motive exists." Our own capital has had something of this kind to show during the season now running to seed,—various private theatricals having been got up in princely houses, ostensibly for "the benefit of the laboring classes."—*Athenæum*.

A NEW violinist, deserving the name, bids fair to become a treasure as hard to find as the blue dahlia for which gardeners would give many a gold medal. Meanwhile, instrumental enterprise is "breaking out" in all manner of fresh places. In the *Journal des Débats*, M. d'Ortigue writes in the highest terms of a new Italian solo performer, who has just appeared in Paris. This is a Signor Colosanti, whose instrument is the ophicleide. M. d'Ortigue declares that the artist treats his instrument with the uttermost contempt for difficulties, drawing out of it tones of consummate delicacy: proving himself thereby another of those great Italians who keep alive the reputation of the South, stagnant as is the tide of musical creation there, and all but silent the voice of Song. MM. Vieuxtemps and Servais the other day commenced a series of concerts in Paris; but so little success attended the first, that the second was not given.—*Athenæum*.

So entirely has Madame Ristori made good her ground in Paris, that government has granted to the Italian Opera of Paris privilege to offer dramatic performances during the months of March, April, and May, for three years to come, led by this successful actress. She has undertaken also, if it be possible, to appear at the *Théâtre Français*, in French drama; and M. Alexandre Dumas, in this case, is to write a part for her. But for the French part of the Parisian story, we suspect that Madame Ristori must have the leave of Mlle. Rachel, who has hitherto shown a heroine's resolution to play in rivalry and prevention of others almost as strong as seems her determination to make money, to harass poor authors into fits, and to quit the stage!—*Athenæum*.

A NEW mezzotint engraving, called the "American Christian Union," has just been published. The scene appears to be the interior of a church, with a congregation of distinguished

divines of all evangelical denominations. Bishop Wainwright is presiding, with the familiar figure of Dr. Cox conspicuously holding forth, while some forty of the leading clergymen of the present day are seated at the right and left. Among them are Drs. Ferris, Krebs, Tyng, Spring, Spencer, Cone, H. W. Beecher, L. Beecher, Bishop Waugh, Bishop Coskry, Rev. E. N. Kirk, and others.

MR. CALDER MARSHALL'S fine statue of Campbell—a statue for which, we are grieved to say, the sculptor remains unpaid—has been erected in its place in Westminster Abbey. It is not very creditable to the poet's friends—and, indeed, to the British public—that a national monument, undertaken by the enthusiastic artist on the strength of his own conviction and the assurance of a recognized committee, should be received from the studio and accepted by the nation for the adornment of one of its lofty places without fair payment. Yet such is the melancholy fact. "Hope" has deceived the artist in this case: and the bard who sang so gloriously of "The Mariners of England," and "The Battle of the Baltic," is indebted for a monument among the people whose hearts swell with his lyrics, and who are so justly proud of his fame, to the self-sacrifice of Mr. Calder Marshall.—*Athenæum*.

THE following is issued as the list of principal singers to appear at the *Italian Opera* of Paris, during the coming winter, under its new direction, Mesdames Grisi, Boccabadati, Penco, Fiorentini, and Borghi-Mamo—Signori Mario, Salvi, Carrion, Mongini, Graziani, Everardi, Angelini, and Zucchini. The *Gazette Musicale* does not give even a rumor as to the possible repertory. In the same number of the Parisian journal, the Edinburgh public is promised an opera-company for the winter, which will include Mesdames Mainville-Fodor and Widman, Signori Neri-Baraldi, Verini, Monari, Bocolini and Zelger: Signor Orsini to be the conductor.—*Athenæum*.

THE Ducal Palace, at Brunswick, is about to receive a splendid sculptural ornament—a quadriga from the hands of Prof. Rietschel, of Berlin. It is executed in commemoration of the present Duke's twenty-five years' reign, and will be completed at the end of 1858. The total cost of the group, it is calculated, will amount to 60,000 thalers (£9,000), of which 20,000 thalers (£3,000) are to be given as honorarium for the model.—*Athenæum*.

THE Roman quarries seem to be inexhaustible. A letter from Rome mentions some fresh discoveries of antiquities, among which are said to be two columns, one of alabaster and the other of marble, both of admirable beauty, dug up in the Via della Scrofa, and a granite column, twenty feet long, with a well-preserved Corinthian capital of marble.—*Athenæum*.

THE performances of opera at Drury-lane have been varied by a revival of "The Mountain Sylph," in which the American lady, Mrs. Escott, has been advertised as singing the part of the *prima donna*.—*Athenæum*.

AN Exhibition of Works of Art is about to open, experimentally, at Worthing.—*Athenæum*.

A NEW railway station, of a more artistic character than the present unsightly building, is to be erected at Chelmsford.—*Athenæum*.

A NEW bust of Sir James Mackintosh has been placed in the Abbey.—*Athenæum*.

A FEW days since, we gave a "bit of our mind" on propriety in Art, taking occasion to condemn, in strong terms, those indecent and gross paintings which excited in the breast other passions than that of worship. In the minds of many, the distinction is not always clear; but to per-

sons at all familiar with Art, there is little hesitancy in pronouncing upon the modesty or immodesty, the purity or impurity of any picture. Some hearts or heads may be destitute of even the faintest perception of a difference between what is vulgar and what is pure: to such it is, perhaps, vain to talk. But to those whose minds are open to good susceptibilities, rather than bad, a further remark upon the theme will not be amiss.

The picture of "Aurora," in the Gallery, contains nine draped figures, and one nude, that of a child. The impression of the whole is one of deep satisfaction, for it is one of beauty not marred by any deformity. Had one of the Sisters been delineated in nudity, had there been any lascivious touches upon the canvas, no matter how true to nature they were, the picture would have been a blemish. It is a study in itself of the grace of pure Art, for not a feature, nor a limb, nor an expression, on the whole canvas, but conveys to the mind that most touching and exquisite sense which always comes with the presence of true beauty.

One of our lady readers remarked: "If you so disapprove of nude figures, how could you regard with so much favor the 'Greek Slave'?" The very question implied a want of proper discrimination on the part of our fair and honest querist. There was naught in the sculpture but what touched even the rudest heart with compassion and adoration. It was a glorious embodiment of the very sublimity of purity; and, as such, its very nudity was necessary to consummate the effect which it so completely produced. The artist entered a dangerous field, but how he has triumphed is evidenced in the tears that have been shed over the Slave. Mark the change had the artist wrought a lascivious smile on the face of the Greek, instead of inprinting there the dreadful anguish of outraged humanity.

But aside from the effect produced by the statue, *per se*, there is truly little parallelism between sculpture and painting, for this reason: the sculptor's highest art is in the perfection of his delineation of life, limb, and muscle. A sculptured coat, or hat, or boots, would excite laughter rather than admiration, even though they were to the very life. When, from a piece of fair marble, the artist essays to carve limb and feature, the mind is involuntarily raised to a respect for the work of so much labor, requiring such a consummate knowledge of the human frame, of expression, &c.; and when, at length, the beauty stands out in its cold and immovable relief, we judge of it as an accomplishment of Art and the embodiment of the genius of the artist; and if it is of that lofty and ennobling character, which is instinctively demanded of every work in white marble, the statue will excite calm, deep contemplation even in the minds of men or women whose hearts are not proverbial of purity: they stand rebuked by such embodiments of unsullied beauty.

The painter enters upon another field—infinity more wide in its range, extended in its subjects, and diverse in their delineations: he has but to seize nature, and, by the curious combination of color, to imprint upon canvas any passion he may desire to represent, any form he may conceive, any beauty or deformity; with such latitude, he should be held to a strict accountability. Does he give us exact transfers of nature, he has achieved his highest ambition; but if he dares to degrade his art by linking with it even the inspiration of lascivious and grovelling passion, there is reason for every pure mind to shrink from his work.

All this, perhaps, the mass of our readers have long since confessed as truth; but to those who see no difference between a nude child, an embodiment of innocence, and a nude woman, an embodiment of lost virtue, we trust the hints will not be without a moral.—*Commercial Register, Sandusky*.